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**CLAIMS:**

What is claimed is:

- 5 1. A method in a data processing system for providing a consulting assessment environment, the method comprising:  
receiving data about a business through a  
questionnaire, wherein the questionnaire is defined by a  
data template;  
10 computing at least one assessment score based on  
formulas in an assessment framework template;  
determining an appropriate action based on the at  
least one assessment score and a suggested actions  
template; and  
15 reporting results based on the at least one  
assessment score and the appropriate action in accordance  
with a report template, wherein the assessment framework  
template and the suggested actions template encode  
business-related domain knowledge including at least one  
20 of best practices, business consultant expertise, and  
business goals.
2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:  
determining a current state of the business based on  
25 the data;  
identifying a desired state for the business using  
the assessment framework template and the suggested  
actions template; and  
performing a gap analysis between the current state  
30 of the business and the desired state of the business to

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determine the appropriate action to achieve the desired state for the business.

3. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

5 identifying benefits and risks based on the at least one assessment score and the appropriate action.

4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

consolidating portions of the results together for  
10 further analysis.

5. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

providing an interface for a client to conduct a self-assessment.

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6. The method of claim 1, wherein the data template includes at least one of interview questions, weighing factors, desired states, benefit descriptions, risk descriptions, suggested actions, cost areas, and

20 terminology.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the assessment framework template includes at least one of scoring information, calculations, suggested actions logic,

25 benefit and risk logic, user feedback, and user input.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one of the data template, the assessment framework template, the suggested actions template, and the report template are

30 made inaccessible to at least one user.

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9. A data processing system comprising:  
a bus system;  
a communications unit connected to the bus system;  
a memory connected to the bus system, wherein the  
5 memory includes a set of instructions; and  
a processing unit connected to the bus system,  
wherein the processing unit executes the set of  
instructions to receive data about a business through a  
questionnaire, wherein the questionnaire is defined by a  
10 data template; compute at least one assessment score  
based on formulas in an assessment framework template;  
determine an appropriate action based on the at least one  
assessment score and a suggested actions template; and  
report results based on the at least one assessment score  
15 and the appropriate action in accordance with a report  
template, wherein the assessment framework template and  
the suggested actions template encode business-related  
domain knowledge including at least one of best  
practices, business consultant expertise, and business  
20 goals.

10. A data processing system for providing a consulting  
assessment environment, the data processing system  
comprising:  
25 receiving means for receiving data about a business  
through a questionnaire, wherein the questionnaire is  
defined by a data template;  
computing means for computing at least one  
assessment score based on formulas in an assessment  
30 framework template;

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determining means for determining an appropriate action based on the at least one assessment score and a suggested actions template; and

5 reporting means for reporting results based on the  
at least one assessment score and the appropriate action  
in accordance with a report template, wherein the  
assessment framework template and the suggested actions  
template encode business-related domain knowledge  
including at least one of best practices, business  
10 consultant expertise, and business goals.

11. The data processing system of claim 10 further comprising:

determining means for determining a current state of  
15 the business based on the data;

identifying means for identifying a desired state for the business using the assessment framework template and the suggested actions template; and

performing means for performing a gap analysis  
20 between the current state of the business and the desired state of the business to determine the appropriate action to achieve the desired state for the business.

12. The data processing system of claim 10 further comprising:  
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identifying means for identifying benefits and risks based on the at least one assessment score and the appropriate action.

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13. The data processing system of claim 10 further comprising:

consolidating means for consolidating portions of the results together for further analysis.

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14. The data processing system of claim 10 further comprising:

providing means for providing an interface for a client to conduct a self-assessment.

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15. A computer program product in a computer readable medium for providing a consulting assessment environment, the computer program product comprising:

15 first instructions for receiving data about a business through a questionnaire, wherein the questionnaire is defined by a data template;

second instructions for computing at least one assessment score based on formulas in an assessment framework template;

20 third instructions for determining an appropriate action based on the at least one assessment score and a suggested actions template; and

fourth instructions for reporting results based on the at least one assessment score and the appropriate action in accordance with a report template, wherein the assessment framework template and the suggested actions template encode business-related domain knowledge including at least one of best practices, business consultant expertise, and business goals.

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16. The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising:

instructions for determining a current state of the business based on the data;

5 instructions for identifying a desired state for the business using the assessment framework template and the suggested actions template; and

instructions for performing a gap analysis between the current state of the business and the desired state  
10 of the business to determine the appropriate action to achieve the desired state for the business.

17. The computer program product of claim 15 further comprising:

15 instructions for identifying benefits and risks based on the at least one assessment score and the appropriate action.

18. The computer program product of claim 15 further  
20 comprising:

instructions for consolidating portions of the results together for further analysis.

19. The computer program product of claim 15 further  
25 comprising:

instructions for providing an interface for a client to conduct a self-assessment.

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20. The computer program product of claim 15, wherein at least one of the data template, the assessment framework template, the suggested actions template, and the report template are made inaccessible to at least one user.